



St Edmunds Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102037
Local Authority Enfield
Inspection number 286257
Inspection date 8 March 2007
Reporting inspector Sean O'Toole

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hertford Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Edmonton
Age range of pupils	4-11		London N9 7HJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8807 2664
Number on roll (school)	427	Fax number	020 8807 8877
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Clarke
		Headteacher	Mr R Greenfield
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This larger than average school is located in a mixed socio-economic area and admits pupils from a wide catchment. A below average proportion is eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and with statements of special educational needs is broadly average. The pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Eight Polish speakers are at an early stage of learning English. Six pupils have Traveller backgrounds. Pupils start school with broadly average attainment. This Investors in People school also holds awards for Basic Skills and Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school fulfils its mission statement, 'To love, to care, to share' exceptionally well. These goals are reflected in high levels of care and support. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding and they are fully equipped academically and socially for the next stage of their education. One of the school's most successful attributes is the way that pupils from diverse backgrounds and abilities work and play together.

Pupils throughout the school, achieve well. Consequently, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The foundations for success are laid in the Reception year, where children thrive and make good progress in basic skills. Most importantly they become well motivated and independent learners. These skills are built on consistently through the school and progress is good. A particular success has been the leadership's drive to raise standards in writing. Staff work together well to provide opportunities for pupils to apply their English skills in other subjects and this has resulted in some imaginative and well written work. The lessons learned are now being applied to mathematics. There remains scope for further improvement in assessing pupils' capabilities in mathematics and in improving marking so that all are sufficiently challenged.

Parents speak highly of all the school does. One said, 'Everyone in the school works as hard as they can to meet the needs of the children.' This is shown in the good teaching which is typical of this school and also seen in the pupils' highly developed attitudes to learning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all the school offers. They value opportunities to take responsibility and their behaviour is exemplary. As one boy said, 'We all get on together, we have lots of friends and our teachers care about us'.

Underpinning the strong and purposeful ethos is the ambition for every child to succeed. Leadership and management play a pivotal role in this and are always looking for ways to improve. Through rigorous self-evaluation and strategic planning they have identified and begun to tackle areas for development. Robust monitoring has led to good levels of consistency in teaching, and sharp target setting has enabled the school to maintain its good standards through a period of change when attainment on admission has fallen. There is excellent management of the provision for those with learning difficulties and for those at early stage of learning English. As a result these groups achieve exceptionally well. The school is well placed to build on its success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics by making better use of assessment to set challenges, especially for the more able.
- Sharpen up marking so that it gives pupils more help to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Boys and girls of all abilities and ages achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are very successful in national tests because of the high levels of support they receive. Those from Traveller backgrounds make rapid progress and in spite of irregular attendance by some, achieve well. Similarly, those with learning difficulties are given intensive support which enables them to make outstanding progress. In English lessons the more able pupils are set demanding work and rise to the challenge, often producing imaginative work as well as showing a good grasp of the basic skills. One Year 6 boy explained why. He said, 'The teachers make learning fun and so we do our best.'

Although the changing nature of the area has meant a dip in the levels of skills and knowledge that pupils start with, standards have been maintained at above average levels since the previous inspection. The school sets challenging targets and meets them because of skilful teaching and highly motivated pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start and are working at appropriate levels for their age when they start in Year 1. This good grounding enables pupils to improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. A good success has been the school's drive to raise standards in writing by providing good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in other subjects. Although standards are above average in mathematics there remains room for further improvement. The work set is sometimes not challenging enough and the pupils say that some is repeated too often which slows their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils have excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities. They have a keen sense of fairness and justice and accept responsibility for their own actions. In an assembly they acted out the story of Lazarus with sensitivity and prompted children and adults to reflect through their beautiful singing. Pupils value the opportunities to learn alongside those from different backgrounds. Through events such as the international evening they enjoy food, songs, stories and the languages spoken in the community. Pupils respect themselves and others and are proud of their achievements. They know how to keep safe and are clued up on internet security, how to deal with strangers and road safety.

They are equipped exceptionally well for the next stage of their education benefiting from working together on projects, being involved in decision making through the school council, taking responsibility in supporting younger children as 'red ties', and being thoroughly grounded in basic skills. They also have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and relish the opportunities to join in the extra-curricular activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. There are several strengths. Planning is thorough and takes account of the needs of different groups. This is often helped by setting pupils by ability so that teachers and support staff are able to focus on small groups or individuals. This works exceptionally well for those with learning difficulties. These pupils have sharply focused targets and are taught specifically how to achieve them. Children in the Foundation Stage also benefit from a good balance between making their own choices and being taught new skills in small groups.

Pupils work hard and enthusiastically. They present their work well and produce good quantities because they work quickly. Lessons are calm and purposeful and teachers have very good ways of controlling the pupils without stifling their enthusiasm. Individualised programmes for pupils from Traveller backgrounds and those at an early stage of learning English ensure that they play a full part in lessons. Pupils say that they enjoy work although in mathematics it is sometimes too easy. Teachers are conscientious in marking but do not use it consistently to set challenges for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum which is enriched with an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for pupils to go on visits. The curriculum enhances pupils' personal development very well as they are encouraged to share their ideas and use their initiative. Most are independent and effective learners. A particular strength has been the development of writing across the curriculum. Pupils are keen to use their skills to create interesting stories and factual accounts in subjects such as history and geography and competently use information and communication technology to present their work. The school plans to use these successes to develop the provision for mathematics to enliven learning. The school has given much thought to broadening opportunities for pupils and by using topics has enabled pupils to see the links between subjects which enhances their learning. Parents are delighted with this aspect of the school's work. One said, 'I have nothing but praise for the way the school tries to interest everyone and uses the children's experiences to make learning fun.'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding levels of pastoral care, guidance and support underpin the school's work. This is a place where every child is seen as an individual who matters. There are robust procedures for child protection and the school provides a safe haven where pupils learn in comfortable environment. The school rigorously checks to ensure that staff and helpers meet government requirements about safeguarding children. Where appropriate, outside agencies effectively support the school in meeting the needs of

the vulnerable. Parents are also given much support and the school has helped parents who are new to the country to meet together for mutual support. Staff keep accurate records of the pupils' academic and social development and there are good assessment procedures for English. Sharply focused targets for pupils in English have contributed much to their improved work in English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior team make a substantial contribution to improving standards and provision. Leadership and management are good and some features are outstanding. At the centre of the school's work is a vibrant and positive ethos in which all are valued. Parents speak highly of the headteacher and staff who they say are totally committed to helping their children to succeed. Another strength is the robust way that senior staff have evaluated the school's work and set about improving it. This has been the result of regular monitoring and support for teachers and assistants. As a result, all are clear about what is expected and are keen to succeed.

The school's strategic plans are clear and adjusted as initiatives change. Good account is taken of parents' and pupils' views. One school councillor said, 'The teachers listen to us and help us to make improvements.' Several staff are new to leadership and are keen to make a difference. Initiatives in improving writing have worked and provide a good model for the development of assessment and mathematics. Governors are strong supporters of the school but their part in monitoring and evaluating the school's work is too dependent on the flow of information from the leadership team rather than on first hand observation. Nonetheless, they have a good knowledge of the next steps in school improvement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for all the help you gave me on my visit to your school. I enjoyed it very much. I was very impressed by the way in which you welcomed me and took an interest in what I was doing. I would like to say a special thank you to the school council for sharing your ideas about the school. Like you, I think the school is good and some aspects of its work are outstanding.

I was very impressed by how well you behave and care for each other. This is a very happy school where everyone wants everyone else to be successful. It was good to see the friendly way in which you play together and make sure that that no-one is left out. You also work hard and clearly love all of the opportunities that you have to join in. It was great to hear that many of you are involved in activities outside of lessons to help you to keep fit and healthy.

Because you work hard and are good at listening you make good progress in learning new things. You are successful in tests in English, mathematics and science. Your writing was a pleasure to read. Many of you are good at mathematics but some of you said you would like harder work. I agree and have asked your teachers to find ways of giving you more challenges.

Your teachers care very much about you and many of you said how much you like them. Your parents really appreciate all they do. The lessons I saw were good and you concentrated well. I have asked your teachers to keep a better check on how well you are doing and to make sure that when they mark your work it shows you how to improve. You can help by listening to their advice and always working hard.

I wish you every success in the future and hope that you will always be as happy at school.

Sean O'TooleLead inspector